

From: Botley West Solar Farm
Sent: 05 September 2023 16:54
To: Russ Tucker
Cc: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: RE: Scoping Report

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Mr Tucker

Many thanks for your email below in respect of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm Project, and apologies for the time it has taken for you to receive a response.

The Proposed Development is currently at the Pre-application stage of the Planning Act 2008 process. Further information about the process can be accessed by following the link below to the National Infrastructure Planning website:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/>.

The Scoping Report referred to in your below email has a specific function within the process set out under Regulation 10 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, whereby a person who proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent may ask the Secretary of State for its opinion as to the scope and level of detail of the information to be provided in the Environmental Statement. Please refer to section 5 of the Planning Inspectorate's ['Advice Note 7: Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements'](#) for further details, including what information developers are required to include in their request under Regulation 10(1) (which is often in the form of a 'Scoping Report').

Moreover, the comments set out in your email below relate broadly to the merits of the Proposed Development. The Planning Inspectorate is unable to consider representations about the merits of any application until the application has been submitted and accepted for Examination. As the application has not yet been formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, your first point of contact should be the developer, Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd, and we would encourage you to continue to raise any concerns with PVDP directly.

Should the application be accepted for Examination by the Planning Inspectorate, you will be able to register as an Interested Party by submitting a Relevant Representation. This must be submitted on the electronic form which will be made available on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website at the appropriate time. Further information about registering as an Interested Party can be found in the Inspectorate's ['Advice Note 8.2: How to register to participate in an Examination'](#).

In the meantime, you may find it helpful to subscribe to receive email notifications for key events that occur after an application has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. To do this, please visit the [project webpage](#) and sign up using the *'Email updates'* box.

I hope you find this information helpful, however if you have any further queries regarding the proposed Botley West Solar Farm application, please email the project mailbox: BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

Kind regards



The Planning
Inspectorate

Botley West Solar Farm Project Case Team

National Infrastructure Planning

The Planning Inspectorate

Helpline: 0303 444 5000

Email: BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk



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From: Russ Tucker [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2023 17:42

To: Botley West Solar Farm <BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

Cc: Andrew Thomson [REDACTED]; Jon Gammage [REDACTED]; Andy

Graham [REDACTED]; Cllr Liz Leffman [REDACTED];

[REDACTED]; Cllr Liam Walker2 [REDACTED]; Lidia Arciszewska

Subject: Scoping Report

Dear Planning Inspectorate and my Councillors,

I would like to draw your attention to what I believe are several omissions from the Scoping Report as produced by the Botley West Solar Farm developer. Please may you ensure that the Developer covers these points in their application.

1. Since the initial community consultation, the proposed site has been expanded. As such, the Phase One Consultation needs to be done again to account for the new local communities and residents that are directly affected. The Developer should provide clarity as to why they expanded the site after the Phase One consultation and what steps they have taken since then to engage all residents again and ensure coverage. They should also cover why their recent community report delivered to households does not mention that the site has expanded.
2. The number of photos at proposed sites to show the impact is woefully inadequate. For an installation that is 11.5 miles long and 3.5 miles wide, there should be hundreds of photos submitted, not ~50. These photos should be taken at midday during Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. This is crucial so that the impact of foliage and a lack of foliage is clear throughout the year.
3. The proposed site sits within close proximity to Blenheim Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The developer's report needs to include letters of support from all Trustees of Blenheim Palace (not Blenheim Estates) and a letter of support from UNESCO, confirming that there is no impact on the World Heritage site whatsoever.
4. There is no plan for decommissioning. The proposal should set out a detailed plan outlining the finance arrangements to appropriately decommission the site. As the company is asking for a temporary licence of ~40 years, there should also be a legal obligation to return the site to agricultural use immediately afterwards. The Developer should outline a proposal for this in their application.
5. There should be a legal guarantee to ensure that any approval does not result in further development on the green belt land. The Developer should outline a proposal for this in their application.
6. There should be consultation letters of support from Natural England, CPRE and Historic England.
7. The details of where the panels will be sourced from should be provided. The Developer should confirm that they are not sourcing the panels from China or any other countries where the UK Government has concerns.

8. The Developer should address recent news articles suggesting that solar panels do not work in high temperatures. The potential failure and downtime of the panels needs to be set out, including a clear plan for repairs and maintenance.
9. An independent assessment of the number of local jobs created by the project over the 40 year lifetime should be clearly set out. The number of people, what they are doing, how much they will be paid, and how much they expect to add to the local economy. The independent assessor should be appointed by the Planning Inspector and paid for by the Developer.
10. An independent assessment of the number of jobs lost as a result of the project over the 40 year lifetime should be clearly set out. The number of farmers, suppliers, farmhands, processors, farm equipment suppliers should be estimated. The independent assessor should be appointed by the Planning Inspector and paid for by the Developer.
11. The net local economic impact on tourism should be independently estimated and set out. The independent assessor should be appointed by the Planning Inspector and paid for by the Developer.
12. The impact on local house prices should be calculated, including an estimate on the number of families and owners that will be forced into negative equity during a mortgage and cost of living crisis.
13. The financing arrangements of the Developer, PVDP, should be clearly set out, confirming that the solar facility is not in fact money laundering, as suggested by recent articles in Private Eye. The ultimate beneficial owner should be made crystal clear and an affidavit should be provided confirming that no proceeds from crime have been used.
14. The removal of cabling as well as panels at the point of decommissioning should be made clear.
15. The proposed specific site for the connection to National Grid should be made clear.
16. A letter of support from National Grid should be provided, confirming that National Grid are comfortable taking electricity supply from whomever the ultimate beneficial owner of PVDP is. National Grid should make clear when they will be able to provide a connection and whether the supply will support Oxfordshire directly or the entire nation.
17. Clarity on the estimated actual supply of electricity at different times of year and day should be provided and a mean average calculated by the Developer.
18. The proposed screening of the solar panels should be made clear, especially as much of the land consists of hills. It is not clear how the Developer will block the views of panels situated on hills. The height of screening and support reports from quantity surveyors will need to be included.
19. The rationale from the lessor, Blenheim Estates, for not installing solar panels on their new-build homes should be provided. This should correlate with any previous public statements that they have made.
20. A letter of support from Merton College should be provided, confirming that they are happy to receive funding for their academic work from the ultimate beneficial owner of the Developer
21. A 40 year strategy should be provided by the Developer outlining their intentions for the project, that is, whether they intend to keep or sell the development. This is especially important given their previous history of selling a site in Japan.
22. Clarity should be provided by the Developer as to why this project that connects directly to the National Grid "will lead the way in achieving Oxfordshire's Energy Strategy agreed target of 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and 100% net zero carbon emissions by 2050". Quotes are from their marketing materials. If evidence cannot be provided, this would demonstrate misleading information provided from the Developer to the local communities and the need to re-run the Phase One consultation with accurate information.
23. The Developer should work with the Oxfordshire County Council to provide a summary of all solar installations already installed and approved for installation within the County, and clearly outline why they believe the size of this installation is necessary to support the ~250,000 homes in Oxfordshire.
24. Letters of support should be provided from all Parish Councils affected, all District Councils affected, both MPs, and the Oxfordshire County Council.

Regards,

Russell Tucker
Hanborough Resident

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